



February 13, 2024

Dear Members of the Committee on Budget and Taxation,

The Nelson Ideation Group, LLC provides management consulting services to public and private sector clients, specializing in appraising diverse certified firms to meet our clients' needs. As Ideation experts, we create business opportunities and provide comprehensive, cost-effective management solutions to implement our clients' ideas and projects, positioning them to be competitive on a local, regional and/or national basis. Our extensive experience in corporate, government and P3 development projects uniquely qualifies us to cultivate critical relationships and create strategic alliances with diverse certified firms, along with developing best practices when needed for those we commit to serve.

We are passionate about the growth and success of our clients.

As Director of Minority & Women-owned Business and Development Director of Minority & Women-owned Business Development for the City of Baltimore from 2007 through 2011 I was responsible for implementing the Mayor's agenda of the Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) program for the City of Baltimore. My role required me to focus on advocating, educating, informing, and promoting the interests of Small, Minority and Women owned businesses in the City of Baltimore as well as reviewing, interpreting, evaluating, and implementing inter-departmental policies, practices, and procedures. In addition, I monitored the efficacy and compliance with City, State, and Federal laws and regulations.

I am enthusiastic about the State of Maryland taking this important step forward in providing the public sector, legislators, private businesses and minority, women and veteran-owned advocacy groups on data that will give all stakeholders an opportunity to see just where we are as a State in achieving the aspirational goal of 29% minority procurements of State contracting opportunities. Providing accurate data on procurement contracts with minority-owned enterprises, women-owned businesses, and veteran owned businesses is another step in the effort to let all Marylanders know where we stand toward goals set back in 2001, that we are still working towards.

The transparency objective will only be effective if the Board of Public Works creates a dashboard that presents information in such a way that it is accessible, easily found, and easy to operate and accurate. The State will need to invest in staff that understand the Dashboard's importance, relevance to meeting the MBE goals, the need to maintain its accuracy and keep the information up to date. Finally, the dashboard should be compatible with the state's Open Budget system to allow for future, potential integration of vendor payments data.